कंट्रोल नहीं करना चाहते। मैंने रेगुलेशन तक की बात में यह कहा कि इंडिपेंडेंट रेगुलेटर काम करे। एक सांसद के सवाल का जवाब देते हुए मैंने यह कहा कि हम प्रैस काउंसिल को शिकायत नहीं करें, सरकार की कोई भूमिका नहीं है। अगर आपको कोई शिकायत है तो आप एक नागरिक के नाते शिकायत कर सकते हैं। यो दोनों बातें कंट्राडिक्टरी कहां हैं? प्रणब दा का सवाल तब तो मुझे समझ में आता जब मेरे किसी भी जवाब में यह प्रतिध्वनि निकलती कि सरकार मीडिया को कंट्रोल करना चाह रही है। मेरे लिखित या मौखिक जवाबों में से एक में भी मैंने ऐसी भनक तक नहीं दी कि सरकार कहीं मीडिया को कंट्रोल करना चाहती है। कांस्टिट्यूशन रिव्यू कमीशन की जो रिकमेंडेशंस हैं, वे मेरे सामने आई हैं।

*487. [The questioner (Shri Kalraj Mishra) was absent. For answer, *vide* page 31 *infra*.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 488.

Tax-exemptions for Ayurveda and ISM

*488. DR. KARAN SINGH:†
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for certain relief and tax-exemptions to help Ayurveda and other Indigenous Systems of Medicine to effectively tap the growing international market for non-allopathic drugs have been considered;

(b) if so, the measures considered; and

(c) the decisions taken in regard thereto and the steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The following fiscal concessions and incentives are available to the ISM&H drugs industry:

1. (i) The Basic Customs duty on medicines of ayurvedic, unani, siddha and homoeopathic systems was reduced from 35 per cent to 30 per cent in the budget for the year 2002-2003, along with the peak rate reduction.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Karan Singh.

(ii) The Basic Customs duty on homoeopathic medicines has been retained at 25 per cent

(iii) In addition, the items will attract applicable rate of countervailing duty, *i.e.* duty equal to the Central excise duty leviable on such items if domestically manufactured, plus 4 per cent Special Additional Duty of customs (SAD).

2. The Income Tax Act provides for various tax benefits for export of articles and things which could also be availed by exporters of non-allopathic drugs.

(i) Under Section 10A, 100 per cent profits from exports from an undertaking established in an export processing zone is exempt from tax.

(ii) Under Section 10B, similar 100 per cent exemption is available for Export Oriented Units.

(iii) Deduction under Secton 80HHC is available to all exporters and is to the extent of 50 per cent of the profits from exports in financial year 2002-2003.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Sir, over the last few decades, the importance of alternative medicine, as it is called, is being widely appreciated around the world. The so-called allopathic system of medicine is, of course, very highly developed; but, it has certain contra-indications. The ayurvedic system, which goes back to the very dawn of our history, has now come to be recognised as a major alternative methodology of treating, based on the concept of शरीरमाद्यम् खलु धर्मसाधनम् in the Atharva Veda.

I would like to know whether in view of the fact that around the world there is now increasing demand for ayurvedic medicines, what particular incentives are you giving to the manufacturers and exporters of these medicines around the world.

As it is, you have mentioned something about the customs duty for imports. That is not the import of my question. The question was that with this worldwide market now for these medicines, which are less toxic and particularly effective in chronic diseases, what particular incentives does the Government propose to give to the manufacturers and exporters of these medicines?

DR. C.P. THAKUR: I totally agree with the hon. Member when he says that there is a demand for ayurvedic medicines all over the world. Keeping in

mind all these things, we requested the Finance Minister to give more incentives to export, quality control, etc. There may be financial constraints, the Finance Ministry has reduced the custom duty only from 35 per cent to 30 per cent. But rest of the requests have not been acceded to. We are constantly pursuing the matter with them. Some facility, some financial concession, should be given to the manufacturers of ayurvedic medicines so that we can increase our exports to other countries. We are constantly pursuing the matter and sometimes arguing with the Finance Ministry to give more incentives to exporters.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot of foreign exchange, in fact, can be earned through these exports; it is not so much a question of giving money to them but earning it. About homoeopathy, it is probably the cheapest form of medication. It is also extraordinarily effective in many cases. Our healthcare delivery system is becoming more and more expensive for the common man. Our policy always should be that in our Government dispensaries, in our Government hospitals, we should have several systems of medicines; we should have ayurveda, we should have homoeopathy, we should have yoga, we should have unani and so on. Would the Minister be kind enough to tell us whether this concept and theory of multiple systems of medicines, the alternative systems of medicines, in our hospitals and dispensaries is being actively implemented or not?

DR. C.P. THAKUR: Yes, Sir. Now we have decided to integrate all the systems of medicines-allopathic, ayurvedic, homoeopathic, siddha, unani, even yoga, in all the systems of medication. We have included some of the ayurvedic drugs for RCH programmes also. We have opened homoeopathic and ayurvedic dispensaries alongwith allopathic dispensary for the CGHS beneficiaries; and also in some of our hospitals. We are gradually integrating these alternative systems of medicines with the allopathic system. Unfortunately, the allopatic world is still very reluctant for this integration. In the universities of America and other countries, they have started teaching something of these systems to allopathic undergraduates and post-graduates. Here, we are still toying with the idea. Still, there is opposition at that level, but on the application level, we have already established.

SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Sir, over a period of time it has been noticed that the Ayurvedic and Unani system of medicines which have been prevalent in this country for centuries, now their importance and practice has deteriorated considerably. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the steps that have been taken for research and development in this

field. I would also like to know what steps have been taken under the liberalised WTO regime in which a lot of our natural products have been taken over by foreign institutes. We had this problem earlier also when they patented turmeric. They have patented a number of things which belonged to this country for centuries.

DR. C.P. THAKUR: Sir, regarding the second part of the question relating to patenting, I would like to inform that we have already started a traditional digital library in which what we are doing is that all the medicines under Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, etc. have been put on the internet in patentable form. Prior to that, there was no information from the Indian side. Now what they do is that they see on the internet whether there is any mention of that anywhere in the world. If they do not see that, immediately they give order for patenting. So, we have done that. We have tried to cover all the medicinal plants and the medicines in that form. It is going to be in English and four other languages, French, German, etc. There it is written that so and so medicine is obtained from so and so plant which is cultivated in India since so many years and reference of use of this plant is mentioned in Ayurveda or any other book on page so and so, etc. so that claim of India is established on that medicine. We have already done this part.

Regarding the first part of the question relating to what we have done to popularise the science of Ayurveda; I would like to say is this. Actually, Ayurvedic products as medicines are not allowed to be exported to USA and other countries because they want certain data, scientific data for importing. They are exported as raw material or as nutraceutical something like that. But if you want to export Ayurvedic products as medicines, in that case scientifc trial and trial data should be there. So, that we have already started.

Regarding good manufacturing practice, I would like to say that we have already introduced it. We are also going to introduce separate advertising system for Ayurvedic medicines. Otherwise also, EPEDA is going for international marketing etc. So, this is what we have done in the area. Sir, many Ayurvedic plants are becoming extinct. Therefore, we have established an additional Medicinal Plants Board. We are encouraging the State Governments to establish State Medicinal Plants Board for which we are giving money also. We have made testing laboratories for Ayurveda available in different parts of the country. So, a lot of steps have been taken becuase the main aim is how we can complete with our neighbouring country whose export is of about Rs. 40,000 crores

whereas out export is only of about Rs. 400 crores. So, we have taken all these steps to step up our exports in Ayurvedic medicines.

SHRI ARJAN SINGH: The Ayurvedic system of medicines originated in this country. ...(*Interruptions*)... My request is that there should be a Short Duration Discussion on this subject.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You give a notice.

DR. RAJA RAMANNA: Sir, the Ayurvedic system of medicines is very, very effective. I have no doubt about it. It is also the responsibility of the Minister to see that taxes should be reduced to the minimum. Otherwise your exports will fall as quickly as they have gone up. The Allopathy as a whole has a list of system of medicines by which you can correctly or to a great extent predict its behaviour and side effects. But as far as Ayurvedic is concerned, I would like to know what methods are being introduced to make sure that our exports and sale in the international market are safe and reliable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Scheme for boys hostels

*481. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the Annual Report of his Ministry for the year 2000-2001, a sum of Rs. 10.80 crore was allocated for the Scheme for Boys Hostels for the year 2000-2001 out of which only Rs. 32 lakhs have been spent;

(b) if so, the reasons for such a large amount remaining unspent; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to ensure that such situations do not arise in future and the amount allocated for a particular scheme is utilized to the fullest spread over the year?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) While it is a fact the allocation under the scheme of Boys Hostels for Scheduled Tribes was Rs. 10.80 crore during the year 2000-2001, the actual release to the States stood at Rs. 250.70 lakh during that year. The position reflected in the Annual Report for the year 2000-2001 was upto January 31, 2001 only.